

Causes and Impacts of Habitat Loss & Degradation

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Activity	Habitats Affected	Impacts To Habitats
<p>Shoreline armouring (“hard” structures such as seawalls, angular rock, jetties, etc, built to protect beaches and shorelines from erosion)</p>	<p>Intertidal and sub tidal shorelines</p> <p>(See altered shorelines)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of complexity and surface area • Depletion of sediment supply to adjacent areas (see coastal sediment processes) • Increased exposure to wave energy; fewer species can survive
<p>Fishing – bottom trawling (large ships that drag weighted nets with rollers across the ocean bottom) 2</p>	<p>Sub tidal and deep water marine areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical destruction of bottom-dwelling plants/animals • By-catch (unmarketable fish species that are thrown away)
<p>Dredging (excavation in marine or freshwater areas)</p>	<p>Sub tidal , intertidal and freshwater habitats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical destruction of bottom-dwelling plants/animals • Smothering of bottom-dwelling organisms with displaced sediment • Fewer plants can grow in reduced light; fish gills become clogged with sediment
<p>Diking and in-filling</p>	<p>Estuaries ; shorelines; wetlands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive intertidal and wetland habitat is destroyed, replaced with ecologically less valuable land use • Decline of commercially important species
<p>Invasive Species</p>	<p>Shoreline, upland , freshwater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly compete with native

	habitats	species for habitat, food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alter structure of habitat; often create dense, unproductive monocultures
Logging and vegetation removal	Upland , freshwater, marine habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroys structure of habitat; Removes organic material necessary for soil replenishment; machinery disturbs soil Can create erosion , which degrades water quality and causes further habitat loss; Less large woody debris in streams alters flow and channel characteristics Reduces natural infiltration of rainwater
Log booming (<i>storage of logs in lakes and sea ports</i>)	Lakes, sheltered marine habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accumulation of wood debris on the bottom of the water body smothers bottom-dwelling plants/animals Chemical composition of substrate is altered Decomposition of wood debris by bacteria depletes oxygen in water
Agriculture	Upland , marine, freshwater habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement of diverse habitats with single- species crops (loss of wildlife habitat) Possible runoff of livestock wastes, pesticides, fertilizers, into freshwater and marine environments Transformation of streams into drainage ditches (less valuable habitat)
Sewage, animal wastes and fertilizer	Streams, wetlands, lakes, marine areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrients cause explosive algae growth; decomposition of

pollution		<p>algae robs water of oxygen; “dead zones” created.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy metals and pharmaceuticals in wastes affect health of aquatic organisms • Sediments in sewage/animal waste may bury bottom-dwelling organisms
Industrial and automobile pollution	All habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many substances are directly toxic to plants/animals; others have long-term cumulative effects on health • Heavily polluted areas become “dead zones” where few organisms can live.

Source :http://www.crd.bc.ca/watersheds/protection/concerns/habitat_loss.htm